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PRESS RELEASE

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Nine Indicted in Drug Conspiracy, Accused of Selling PCP in Washington Area - PCP, Firearms Seized in Searches -

WASHINGTON - Nine people have been indicted in connection with an ongoing investigation by the Metropolitan Police Department, Drug Enforcement Administration and FBI into a drug ring operating in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area. Most were arrested Wednesday, as authorities conducted searches that led to the seizure of PCP and firearms.

The indictments, accusing the defendants of participating in a ring that distributed PCP, were announced today by U.S. Attorney Ronald C. Machen Jr., Cathy L. Lanier, Chief of the Metropolitan Police Department (MPD), Ava A. Cooper-Davis, Special Agent in Charge of the Washington Division Office of the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), and John G. Perren, Acting Assistant Director in Charge of the FBI's Washington Field Office.

Six defendants were indicted by a grand jury in U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia on a charge of conspiracy to distribute and possess with intent to distribute PCP. They include Allen Lee Sheffield, 31; Spencer Eugene Moore, 31; Latrell Brandon Thompson, 21; Raoul Brandon Lawrence, 35, and Tiffany Harris, 28. The sixth defendant is not yet in custody. If convicted, they face a minimum of 10 years of incarceration.

The indictment, returned last week, was unsealed today in U.S. District Court. Sheffield, Thompson, Lawrence and Harris appeared in court this afternoon and were ordered held without bond pending detention hearings scheduled for Tuesday, October 26.

Three other men were indicted by the grand jury on charges of distribution of a controlled substance and will be prosecuted in the Superior Court of the District of Columbia. They include Alexis Santos, 19, Antonio Whitaker, 20, and a third man who has not yet been arrested.

The investigation focused on allegations of narcotics activities from August 1, 2009 through October 15, 2010. The organization primarily operated in an area of Northwest Washington

bounded by Euclid Avenue to the north, Florida Avenue to the south, 11th Street to the west, and Sherman Street to the east. Within this grid is a housing complex known as Garfield Terrace. Although this was the main distribution location of the organization, sales took place throughout the Washington, D.C. area.

Many of the defendants were arrested Wednesday. MPD and DEA investigators executed search warrants at seven locations that day and seized two firearms, approximately two ounces of PCP, and small amounts of crack cocaine and marijuana.

In addition to the conspiracy charge, the indictment charges Sheffield, Moore, Lawrence and Thompson with additional federal counts of unlawful distribution of PCP.

“Drugs ruin the lives of fathers and mothers and destroy the futures of our children. PCP is an especially potent poison that kicks off violent and erratic behavior that threatens our families,” said U.S. Attorney Machen. “This case demonstrates that we will aggressively prosecute those who sell PCP and other dangerous narcotics on the streets of the District of Columbia. Together with our partners at MPD, DEA, and FBI, we are committed to improving the quality of life of D.C. residents by bringing drug dealers and other criminals to justice.”

“One of the key components in this case was that I asked our federal partners specifically to assist us in going after PCP because of the violence associated with that drug,” said Chief Lanier. “And our joint efforts resulted in the apprehension of those responsible for distributing large quantities of PCP, a drug that is killing our kids.”

“This week’s operation was a collaborative effort between DEA’s Mobile Enforcement Team and MPD, the effects of which will be felt for years,” said Ava Cooper-Davis, DEA Special Agent in Charge. “The quality of life for residents of Garfield Terrace neighborhood will improve because we removed a crew of people who peddled large quantities of PCP, an extremely violent drug.”

U.S. Attorney Machen, Chief Lanier, Special Agent in Charge Cooper-Davis, and Acting Assistant Director in Charge Perren praised the efforts of the MPD, DEA, and FBI personnel who worked on the case, as well as Assistant U.S. Attorneys Bill O’Malley and Emory V. Cole, who are prosecuting the matter.

An indictment is merely a formal charge that a defendant has committed a violation of criminal laws and every defendant is presumed innocent until, and unless, proven guilty.